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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0363

INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 001033

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/25/2017

TAGS: PREL IZ

SUBJECT: IRAQI PM AGREES TO ISTANBUL ICI AND NEIGHBORS-PLUS CONFERENCE IF PARTICIPANTS BACK GOI-FRIENDLY AGENDA

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Khalilzad, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) On March 24, Iraqi PM Maliki told the Ambassador he would agree to holding the Iraq Neighbors Conference ministerial in Istanbul if the other participants agree to a substantive agenda/outcome in advance with which Iraq is comfortable. He also agreed the P-5 and G-8 could be included. Furthermore, the PM agreed to hold the signing event for the International Compact for Iraq (ICI) in Istanbul the day prior to the Neighbors Conference, however the PM continues to prefer Riyadh as the venue for ICI.

¶2. (C) The PM remains concerned about the scope and substance of the Neighbors Conference. He agrees with Embassy Baghdad's proposed substantive framework (which we e-mailed to the Department March 22), but wants assurances that the other participants agree to this framework as part of Iraq agreeing to Istanbul as the venue for the ministerial. The PM noted that some Shi'a coalition leaders are still uncomfortable with the basic concept of a neighbors conference. The Ambassador reassured him that the U.S. would work with him to make certain the agenda followed the lines of the proposed framework.

¶3. (C) There was no discussion of a third conference.

KHALILZAD